1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

585 Kota musicians, and bring therefrom water for cooking purposes in decorated new pots. The bride then salutes all her new relations, and they in turn give her their blessing. The ceremonial concludes with a feast, at the conclusion of which, in some cases, the bride and bridegroom sit on the raised verandah (pial), and receive presents.

181 "Though," a correspondent writes, "the Badaga is simple, and his wants are few, he cannot resist the temptation of wine and women. The Badaga woman 586 can change husbands as often as she pleases by a simple • 587 system of divorce, and can also carry on with impunity (837) intimacy within the pale of her own community. It is not uncommon to find Badaga women changing husbands, so long as youth and vigour tempt them to do so, and confining themselves eventually to the last individual, after age and infirmity have made their mark, and render such frolics inexpedient." A former Magistrate of the 578 Nilgiris informs me that he tried more than one case, in 691 which a married man filed a complaint against another man for kidnapping or enticing away his wife for immoral purposes. The father of the woman was always charged as an abetter, and pleaded that, as no pariyam (bride price) had been paid by the husband, though he and the woman lived together as man and wife, no criminal offence could be proved against either the 595 father or the abductor. Polygamy is permitted, and the plurality of wives is a gain to the husband, as each wife becomes a bread-winner, and supports her children, and the man makes each wife superintend one department of the day's work. 587 Remarriage of widows is very common, and a widow may marry the brother of her 837 deceased husband. It is said to be etiquette among the Badagas that, when a woman's husband is away, she

585 couple then put on wreaths called sammandha mālai, or wreaths establishing relationship, and the wrist threads are tied on. The bride's sister brings some rice and milk in a cup, into which the linked fingers of the bride and bridegroom are thrust. Taking up some of the rice, they put it into each other's mouths three times. After they have washed their hands, the maternal uncle or priest asks them if they have seen Aranjoti (the pole-star), and they reply in the affirmative. On the third day, presents are given to the newly-married couple, and the wrist threads are removed. Going to a stream, they perform a mimic ceremony of sowing, and scatter cotton and rice seed in two small pans made by a Toreya with
587 cow-dung. Widow remarriage is permitted among the Udayas, and a widow may marry a cousin, but not her dead husband's brother. At the marriage ceremony, a
585 priest makes a mark with sacred ashes on the foreheads of the contracting couple, and announces the fact of their union.

428 It is noted by Dr. Rivers that "Breeks has stated that the Toda custom is that the house shall pass to the youngest son. It seems quite clear that this is wrong, and that this custom is absolutely unknown among the Todas. It is, however, a Badaga custom, and among them I was told that it is due to the fact that, as the sons of a family grow up and marry, they leave the
(593) house of the parents and build houses elsewhere. It is
(888) the duty of the youngest son to dwell with his parents, and support them as long as they live, and, when they die, he continues to live in the paternal home, of which he becomes the owner."

843 A ceremony is performed in the seventh month of a
(585) woman's first pregnancy, which is important, inasmuch
(586) as it seals the marriage contract, and, after its perform-

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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French-supported film factory and a protein products factory, supposedly to improve farm productivity and employ the pool of Badaga graduates.

MODERN LAWS

Certain pieces of legislation often regarded as milestones in the modernization of Indian society have affected the Badagas very little, and these we need review only briefly.

The Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act, 1856, had no particular effect on Badagas since there was never any interdict against remarriage of their widows. The Hindu Women's Right to Property Act, 1937, has always been ignored by Badagas, and the women have never challenged their traditional treatment: the property is only inherited by males. Nor does the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, receive due recognition from Badagas: marriages are still not always monogamous and are sometimes contracted with grooms below eighteen or brides below fifteen. Kotas and lowland Harijans, although supposedly protected by the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955, are never allowed into Badaga temples and are normally served with separate 'untouchable' glasses when they drink at a village teashop. People in Nilgiri villages may not be ignorant of such legislation, but there certainly remains some resistance to the idea of integrating the official system of law and administration into Badaga culture. Even more resistance can be found among the Todas, Kotas and Kurumbas.

NOTES

1. Meaning, respectively, Toda division, Western division, Europeans' division (from *ferangi*, 'Franks') and peak division (from Tamil *kunru*, 'mount'). Why one division should have been named after Europeans is not clear, unless it be a reference to seventeenth-century Jesuits who may have entered this area from Sattiyamaṅgaḷa and Me:ṭṭupa:ḷaya, where they were then active; Société des Missions-étrangères, 1933, vol. xii, 234-235. The name is certainly ancient. Grigg, 1880, 13, n. 1, and Macleane, 1893, 678, derive this name however from Tamil *periya Ranga*, 'great god Ranga,' who is worshipped in this area; see above, p. 127. Throughout the nineteenth century these territorial divisions were adopted by British administrators, but in 1882 they were superceded by the three *taluks* (Gudalur, Ootacamund, Coonoor) that are still recognized today.

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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615 groups, called phratries. These are like subcastes, except that they have no form of occupational specialization and members are often permitted to marry outside their own phratry. In this hierarchy the conservative Wodeya group is at the highest level and the Toreyas, servants of the headmen, are the lowest. Between these two there are one phratry of vegetarians and five others of meat-eaters. The Chris-
[197] tian Badagas, the first of whom was converted in 1858, belong to a separate meat-eating phratry which, although ranked below the lowest Hindu group, is respected for its progressive habits. Each of
615 these phratries is made up of several clans which are exogamous,
614 and every Badaga village belongs to one of these clans. There are no "multi-caste" villages. In effect this means that a man must marry a girl from another village, and she will come to live with his clan.

582 Although cross-cousin marriage is the norm, many of the Badaga rules of marriage differ from those which usually govern the South Indian Hindu. Most remarkably, marriage is allowed between
[614] members of clans which have a different ranking, and it is of little concern whether the man is of a lower or higher clan than his wife.
595 A man may have more than one wife — in one case as many as five
586 simultaneously. Divorce and remarriage are easy and quite accept-
587 able in the community. Even widows can remarry without prejudice or criticism. It has recently become common for a dowry to be paid
583 by the bride's family on her marriage; but the traditional custom is for the husband to pay bridewealth. This sum, nowadays 200 rupees, does not purchase the bride, but covers the ornaments she brings with her to the wedding.

582 Certain marital relationships are more favoured than others. Marriage for the Badagas is ideally between cross-cousins and a man should, if possible, marry either his father's sister's daughter or his mother's brother's daughter. But other relatives are permissible, provided they belong to the appropriate clan. A man may marry a girl far younger than himself, one of a different generation-level; and although throughout his life he can only belong to the generation he was born into, a woman changes hers according to her current
[595] husband's position. It is even possible for a man to marry a woman and her daughter (provided she is not *his* daughter) and her granddaughter. All three wives are then considered as belonging to the same generation.

619 An important feature of this community, from the point of view

ness 1832: 42). It was also reported that some young men of dubious virtue were noted for the frequency with which they walked away (Francis 1908: 131-32).

Such freedom no longer finds parental connivance, and today a girl is expected to be a virgin at marriage. She may continue to be one for some time afterwards too, for it is usually the mothers of the couple who decide when to "send them to the bed-house," as the euphemism goes. No such restrictions occur for a woman who has already been married before, and in one reported instance such a bride actually took the initiative on the first night by fondling her previously impotent groom until he was able to do what was expected of him.

In earlier times, a reliable informant estimated, a mere one or two per cent of men had relations with their brides prior to marriage, and this was because girls were married at about puberty. He also estimated that perhaps ten per cent of bridegrooms had had sexual relations before marriage with girls other than their brides. Another man who was married in 1930 asserted that his 12-year old bride lacked a hymen, but did not reach menarche until two months after marriage. This and similar anecdotes do at least suggest girls used to become sexually active around the age of 12; female education has probably elevated this age somewhat (but on the other hand it is not uncommon for young virgins to lack a hymen). In earlier times it used to be fairly common for girls of the well-to-do gentry families to marry as young as at 10 or 11 years. They tended to be well-fed and well-built girls, but menarche had not yet occurred. For the sake of form nonetheless such a bride would spend the usual five days in the menstrual hut prior to her wedding.

3.9. When the couple are especially young the boy's parents may place all sorts of barriers in the way of their consummating the marriage. This is common, and generally because the parents want the girl to work but not have children yet. Needless to say, the resourceful couple can outwit the parents in this matter, for example by an afternoon meeting while the rest of the household is out working in the fields. A more leisurely ruse is for the young husband to send his wife away to visit her father, and then to follow her after a short time. Since a bride is not supposed to do any work while visiting her parents, and since her husband is always welcome in their home, the couple will have plenty of time alone together while the rest of the family is working outside the house. And many Badaga villages have dense forest nearby.

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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833 course simply to please their parents; or so that the husband will not be suspected of impotence by his watchful relatives; or so that his parents may not accuse the girl of being barren; or, when one of them does want intercourse, the other does it merely to oblige. Pub-
[208] lic opinion is an important factor in sexual relations, and it must if possible be satisfied by a pregnancy. If a couple have no children
842 a divorce may be forced upon them after a while, even if neither
586 of them wants that. When a couple have no children outsiders start
208 asking their parents, "What is the matter with them?" Interestingly, loose talk of this sort will be directed towards the childless husband before people — primarily his parents — begin to attach any blame to the girl.

833 Older couples who have several children continue to engage in
887 coitus either for pleasure or out of habit, I was told. Men may con-
886 tinue into old age, perhaps performing the act no more than once a month; but women tend to lose interest once menopause has set in, and are often not in the best of health by that time. A small mino-
587 rity of widowers decide they have the strength to remarry and provided they are wealthy enough to support another wife may intimate this interest to a male friend of equal age. He will tell the old man's sons and daughters about the idea, and these children will then look around for a new stepmother. This however will only occur after they have tested the old man's capabilities. One test is to have some-
[514] one observe him when he urinates: it must be noted whether the flow
[829] of urine was strong enough to make a slight hole in the mud, which would be taken as an indication of suitable strength. A further test
587 might involve the wife of his younger brother. She would be deputed
835 to catch him somewhere privately where she might suggest particular women for him, or even go so far as to assay his capabilities herself. Such an affair would be impermissible if the old man were related as a "husband's father" to her — albeit a classificatory one. But otherwise, provided the affair were handled with discretion, it would be quite acceptable for her to have relations with a husband's brother. Furthermore "it is quite common for a widow to marry her
587 brother-in-law" ("Miles" 1933: 74). In the past a wealthy old widower
833 might ask a younger man to find him a wife. If successful in this he would probably locate a young but barren woman, who might well complain right away that such an old man could not satisfy her. This dilemma was sometimes overcome when the go-between undertook to satisfy the woman provided she married his older friend.

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In a similar arrangement an old man's younger brother slept with the new wife and begot children who were treated as her husband's. Such practices now seem to have stopped. "Children for an older man are a weight on his shoulder," says the proverb.

3.16. In keeping with the idea that intercourse should satisfy a couple, Badagas are familiar with a variety of coital approaches—although nothing like that described in the *Kama Sutra*. The psychological benefits of making love are acknowledged in a proverb: "[If husband and wife are] not on good terms before midnight, they will play after midnight."

Badagas customarily take a bath before having sexual relations, and under normal conditions are both nude when making love. Older couples are generally naked in bed, but nowadays the younger people wear pyjamas or underwear. Young men, particularly if educated in a city, know how to use foreplay to get a woman excited. Until European films were seen in the Nilgiris, however, mouth-kissing was not indulged in, although men did kiss and bite the neck, cheeks and breasts of their women. Inside the house the normal position for intercourse is lying on a bed, but if they have to hurry the couple will use a standing position or stoop over something, with the man entering from behind, as indeed they do when in the forest. Parents may have relations in the same bed their children are sleeping in, in which case they will lie on their sides during intercourse. Curiously, a couple can do this with their baby lying beside them, and it will not be affected by the "bad wind" of coitus; whereas if they do it in another room they must not come near their baby until they have cleaned themselves and put on fresh clothes, for fear that the baby will be affected. Furthermore, if they also have some older children they may take them into the same bed with the baby before having intercourse in that very bed; the belief here being that even though the other children are weaned they too could be affected by this very dangerous "wind" if they were sleeping in another room. Young couples with no children generally sleep in a small room by themselves, on the end of the veranda. If their ageing parents live with them, the couple may leave the inner room to them and sleep under the wide shelf in the outer room. Otherwise a couple will occupy the inner room at night. If a man has two wives he usually has relations with one in the presence of the other, all three sharing the same bed.

Although a young bride should be the first to get up in the morn-

Fertility and Infertility

3.17. A basic problem of public health administration—to control the abundant fertility of Indian and other Asian populations—has never been taken for a problem by the Badaga community. Even though their population has increased from 2,207 in 1812 to 104,392 in 1971 their village leaders are only now beginning to perceive that such a staggering increase (4,730 per cent in 160 years) has to be curtailed. Sons were of course valued in a farming community in a frontier-like situation, and long after swidden agriculture had ceased and the amount of farmland stabilized people still thought in terms of having a number of sons for security. This entailed on the average having the same number of daughters. ("Even though you repeatedly tell her, she is only delivering girls," a proverb bemoans.) And as standards of public hygiene slowly increased so too did the excess of births over deaths. In various prayers Badagas still ask: "May the house be filled with children!" In contrast, however, one proverb acknowledges that, "The mother who has given birth to ten children [is almost like someone] dead from having fallen in the lake." Another traditional proverb counsels: "Rather than deliver ten pigs [i.e., unscrupulous children], deliver one [good child] Nandi." In the 600 households of my sample the average nuclear family had 3.7 children.

For Badagas then, the more important problem is infertility. Several lady therapists have built their reputations on their abilities to cure or at least to predict a woman's barrenness. In some marriages, as we have seen, the apparent infertility is an effect, in the Badaga's view, of the couple thinking about divorce and hence not satisfying each other through intercourse. "Treatment" for infertility will be discussed in more detail below (6.62).

The commonest solution for an infertile marriage is for the woman to bring her younger sister into the home as a second wife. Should the latter prove infertile too their natal family is considered accursed: the thought that the problem might lie with the husband does not arise. If the barren wife does not supply a substitute she is usually sent home to her parents. Her fate then, if she is lucky, will be to marry a widower who needs a woman's labour in the house but who already has his children (Jagor 1876: 200). Nowadays childless couples tend to follow the South Indian practice of visiting distant temples on pilgrimage, and promising to give the gods something when they have been blessed with a son.

565 family even though it is not one: this represents a change from the 19th Century
556 situation. Unlike the members of other phratries, however, a wealthy Toreya
(615) will only receive the respect due to a member of the gentry from the other members of his own phratry. To anyone else he is primarily a Toreya rather than a prestigeful man.

In the arrangement of marriages, although it is obligatory (as we have
582 seen) to take brides from other sibs and is sometimes acceptable to take them from
614 other phratries, it is not common or desirable to take brides from across the divi-
615 sion between gentry and non-gentry. A Kaggusi man, for example, may take a Ganda bride, thereby crossing the limits of his phratry and of the vegetarian community; yet if he is of the gentry his bride should be so too.

•587 The gentry are the only Badaga families who have any compunctions about
565 the remarriage of widowers. No young woman of a gentry family would marry a man who had performed the crucial rice-sprinkling ceremony at the funeral of his previous wife. This is therefore an exception to the usual Badaga practice of allowing remarriage freely to both widowers and widows. If a widower of the
(764) gentry has done this ceremony he can only marry a widow of the gentry. With this in mind, if a widower wants another young wife as soon as his previous wife has died, his brother does the rice-sprinkling ceremony at her funeral instead (provided the parents of the brother's wife agree to it). This is supposed to be a public affirmation that it was really her husband's brother who had supported the dead
(584) woman; although everybody knows that this is a mere fiction. The parents of his
(581) wife must agree to the performance because they might not want their daughter married to a fictional widower, particularly if he too is treated as "gentry"; but they usually agree willingly because it is to the advantage of all concerned

for the real widower to marry a girl capable of adding a number of sons to the family. Thus, provided the previous wife's funeral has been handled in this manner, it is considered ethical for the widower to marry a putative virgin from another family of the gentry.

Generally all of the headmen and headmen's regular assistants belong to the gentry; and during the last century the British officials normally appointed their manegars and karnams (i.e. headmen and accountants) from among the gentry too (Grigg 1880: 366).

In keeping with the image of his greater honor, wisdom and prestige, a member of the gentry receives rather different treatment than an ordinary man at the hands of the Badaga judicial council. Traditional Badaga law holds the individual responsible for his acts, and treats him as the offender if he is found guilty of some crime. Among the gentry, on the other hand, the head of the family is responsible for the acts of all members of his family even though he may know nothing about them. This was vividly illustrated by a case in 1963, which I will quote from my field-notes.

"Belli is the traditional headman of a Badaga hamlet and, as he is the eldest of several brothers, he is also head of his family, which is considered a gentry family. One day he met his friend Lingan, a prominent elder from the neighboring hamlet. They were on a footpath in the fields belonging to Lingan's people. Without any prior explanation or greeting, Lingan abused Belli roundly for his despicable behavior. Belli was taken aback, and questioned him about the meaning of this outburst. He thus learned that one of his brothers had just kicked a Tamilian boy employed by the neighboring hamlet to look after their cattle. Normally Lingan would not have concerned himself with a minor hurt done to a non-Badaga in his hamlet; but in this case, because the boy was employed by the hamlet

two men, Ego and 'N', who find that they are "sons-in-law" to each other, because Ego is FZH to 'N' but is also a classificatory BS to the wife of 'N'. Thus, if the permitted marriage that Diagram 1 illustrates takes place, the two men do not know how to treat each other according to the rules that normally guide behaviour towards affines. The problem is resolved by determining which man is the older one and is thus entitled to the deference of the other.

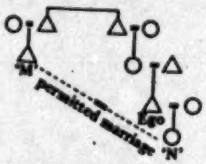

Diagram 2

The same point about the non-recognition of affinal generation levels is brought out in a second example. In Diagram 2 Ego should not show respect to 'M', although the latter is of a superior generation level, because it is permissible for 'M' to marry 'N'. Ego therefore calls 'M', his potential son-in-law, by name instead of by a kin term, as he would otherwise do in addressing an older person. It is important to note that in a society where remarriage is common and polygyny does occur, any married couple can quite probably trace the kin relationship linking them through two or even three different routes. In such a situation, aggravated as it is by the commonness of "cross-generational" marriages, affinal generation levels really become unmanageable concepts, since Ego's spouse could conceivably be assigned to several different generation levels, from his point of view, depending on which way her relationship to him was traced through their kinship field.

Rights over the wife as genetrix rest fully with her husband and his lineage. Upon divorcing her he assumes control and responsibility for all of the children she has produced for him, boys and girls, and she is sent back to her father's house (cf. Table 5).

The fundamental principle of patriliny finds biological justification in the Badaga theory of conception. In their traditional view, a foetus develops solely from the semen of the father. The only biological role of the mother is a nurturing one, seen as rather analogous to manuring a field. Blood comes to the foetus from the mother's stomach, where it has been made from digested food; and after the delivery her milk also comes from digested food in the stomach. While the mother's role is thus a crucial one in that she feeds the foetus and baby, it is not considered to develop from her flesh at all.